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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/925,735	08/06/2001	Masaru Kihara	249-187	3183
7590	11/26/2003			
NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C. 1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor Arlington, VA 22201				EXAMINER CREPEAU, JONATHAN
				ART UNIT 1746
PAPER NUMBER				

DATE MAILED: 11/26/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/925,735	KIHARA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jonathan S. Crepeau	1746

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 August 2001.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-3 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ovshinsky et al (U.S. Patent 5,523,182). Regarding claims 1-3 and 5, in column 26, line 45 et seq., the reference teaches a method of preparing a positive active material by chemically oxidizing nickel hydroxide and then either chemically or electrochemically reducing it. Regarding claims 2 and 3, a cobalt compound is coated on the surface of the nickel hydroxide (see col. 26, line 55 et seq.; col. 25, lines 33-41). Regarding claim 3, the cobalt compound is oxidized to a higher order by treating in an alkaline solution (see col. 26, lines 17-19 and lines 60-62). Regarding claim 6, a positive electrode comprises a porous substrate and a slurry of the active material and a binder (see col. 10, lines 31-37; col. 21, lines 44-50). Regarding claim 7, an alkaline storage battery comprises the positive electrode, a negative electrode, a separator, and an alkaline electrolytic solution (see col. 6, line 25; claim 5 of the reference).

Thus, the instant claims are anticipated.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ovshinsky et al. in view of JP 11-144723.

Ovshinsky et al. is applied to claims 1-3 and 5-7 for the reasons stated above. However, the reference does not expressly teach that the average valence of the nickel is between 2.10 and 2.30, as recited in claim 4.

In the abstract, JP 11-144723 teaches a nickel hydroxide active material having an average nickel valence of 2.1 to 2.3.

Therefore, the invention as a whole would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because the disclosure of JP '723 would motivate the artisan to adjust the average valence of the nickel hydroxide of Ovshinsky et al. to be in the range of 2.1 to 2.3. In the abstract, JP '723 discloses that this "increase[s] the discharge capacity in a high-rate discharge of a battery." Accordingly, this would sufficiently motivate the artisan to adjust the average valence of the nickel hydroxide of Ovshinsky et al. to be in the range of 2.1 to 2.3.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan Crepeau whose telephone number is (703) 305-0051 (prior to December 17, 2003) or (571) 272-1299 (after December 17, 2003). The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Randy Gulakowski, can be reached at (703) 308-4333. The phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-5900. Additionally, documents may be faxed to (703) 872-9310 (for non-final communications) or (703) 872-9311 (for after-final communications).

Any inquiry of general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

JSC

November 20, 2003

Jonathan Crepeau
Jonathan Crepeau
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1746